CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 260
Summer 2021

CAAT NOMINATED FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

PLUS

Military spending review P6–7
UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia P8–10
It Starts Here 2021 P14–15

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE

CAAT NEWS

Issue 260
Summer 2021

It's been an eventful few months. Almost as soon as the last issue was finalised it was announced that the US was suspending arms sales to Saudi Arabia. This is a major change and sets a very welcome precedent.

In this issue we consider what that means, while also reflecting on what it will mean for the UK. We also have some interesting news about CAAT on page 3, which is only possible because of your fantastic support!

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Campaign Against Arms Trade works to end the international arms trade. The arms business has a devastating impact on human rights and security and damages economic development. Large-scale military procurement and arms exports only reinforce a militaristic approach to international problems.

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Contents

3 CAAT nominated for a Nobel Prize
4–5 Arms Trade Shorts
6–7 UK military policy | Business as Usual
8–10 Arms sales to Saudi Arabia
11 Local groups
12 Scotland groups and ministerial meetings
13 Security & Policing | DSEI
14–15 It Starts Here | Introducing Katie | They said it

Photo: Bob Bob | Source: Flickr

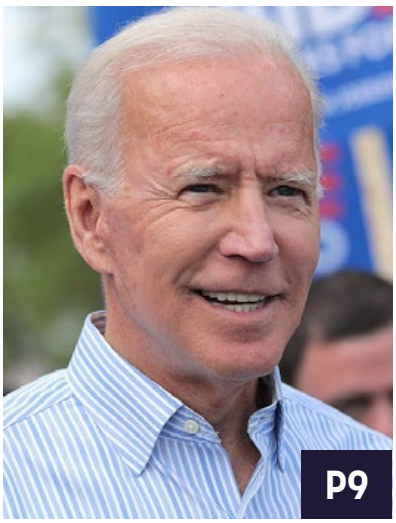

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Photo: David Allan | Source: Flickr

WHAT A NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOMINATION MEANS FOR OUR CAMPAIGNING

CAAT has been nominated for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize alongside our partner Mwatana for Human Rights, a grassroots organisation working in Yemen. But what does this mean for our campaigning?

A surprise call

The news that Campaign Against Arms Trade has been nominated for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize is still sinking in. We couldn't quite believe it when we got a surprise Zoom call from The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to let us know that we've been nominated alongside our partner Mwatana for Human Rights, a grassroots organisation working in Yemen.

The AFSC and British Friends Service Council accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of Quakers worldwide in 1947, in recognition of 300 years of Quaker efforts to heal rifts and oppose war. This means they have the right to nominate others for the Prize and it's a role they take very seriously with an annual deliberation process to decide who to nominate.

What this means for our campaigning

The nomination from AFSC and Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) aims to draw attention to CAAT's work to stop the UK government's sales of arms to Saudi Arabia, particularly our ongoing court case to challenge the UK government's decision to resume arms sales to the Saudi regime for use in the war in Yemen.

This is also an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the suffering of the Yemeni people who are experiencing the world's worst humanitarian disaster. Millions are facing starvation as a direct result of the actions of the Saudi-led coalition. This is all made possible by weapons supplied by the UK and sustained by its ongoing military support.

> *This is also an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the suffering of the Yemeni people who are experiencing the world's worst humanitarian disaster.*

Inspirational Yemeni groups like Mwatana have shown remarkable dedication in documenting human rights violations by all parties to the war and raising the voices of victims in exceptionally dangerous circumstances.

As Oliver Robertson, the Head of Quaker Peace and Social Witness, said: "We hope this nomination will not only highlight the excellent work for peace by Mwatana and Campaign Against Arms Trade but encourage others to shut off the flow of armaments and instead work hard to build a sustainable peace in Yemen."

An honour

We are truly honoured that our campaigning is being acknowledged in this way. **This nomination is a tribute to all of us**. If you have ever signed a petition, come to a protest, shared on social media, written to your MP, made a donation, or taken any other action against the arms trade, you have helped to make this happen. Thank you for all you do.

You can find the answers to the most common questions we've had about the nomination so far at **caat.org.uk/nobelfaq**

ARMS TRADE SHORTS

UK policing

The UK government has published the controversial Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which threatens the right to protest as well as providing other repressive powers. Critics have criticised the government for rushing the bill through parliament without proper scrutiny.
Friends of the Earth 15/03/2021

Photo: Bob Bob | Source: Flickr

Egypt

The Egyptian military has agreed to buy a major surface-to-air missile system from MBDA, a UK arms company that specialises in missile technology. Egypt is the first international buyer of this particular system.
MBDA 23/02/2021

US and India

Following a visit to New Delhi by top-ranking US military officials, the US and India have announced that they are strengthening their military relationship, agreeing to "deepen defense cooperation, intelligence sharing and logistics."
The Independent 20/03/2021

US military

US President Joe Biden has said that he expects the US to withdraw military forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2021. By that point the military intervention and occupation will have lasted for 20 years.
Military.com 25/03/2021

Arms fairs

The organisers of the Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair have confirmed that it will be taking place as a live event this September. DSEI happens every two years at the Excel Centre in London and is attended by military buyers from around the world, see page 14 for more details about the resistance to it.
Naval News 01/02/2021

The UK Ministry of Defence was among those that sent a delegation to Abu Dhabi for the biennial IDEX arms fair, which, with 45,000 visitors, is the biggest arms fair in the Middle East.
Defense News 17/02/2021

Serco

UK outsourcing company Serco has agreed to buy US military contractor Whitney, Bradley & Brown, which reported revenues of $212 million in 2020 through work done with different US military branches.
Financial Times 16/02/2021

Rolls Royce

The Norwegian government has said that it will block Rolls Royce from selling a Norwegian maritime engine maker to a Russian company. The sale has been blocked on national security grounds, with the Justice Minister, Monica Maeland, saying "it is necessary to prevent the company from being sold to a group controlled from a country with which we do not have security cooperation."
Reuters 23/03/2021

Germany

The German Government has decided to cancel the purchase of a new anti-missile system, instead opting to buy counter-drone technology.
Defense News 23/03/2021

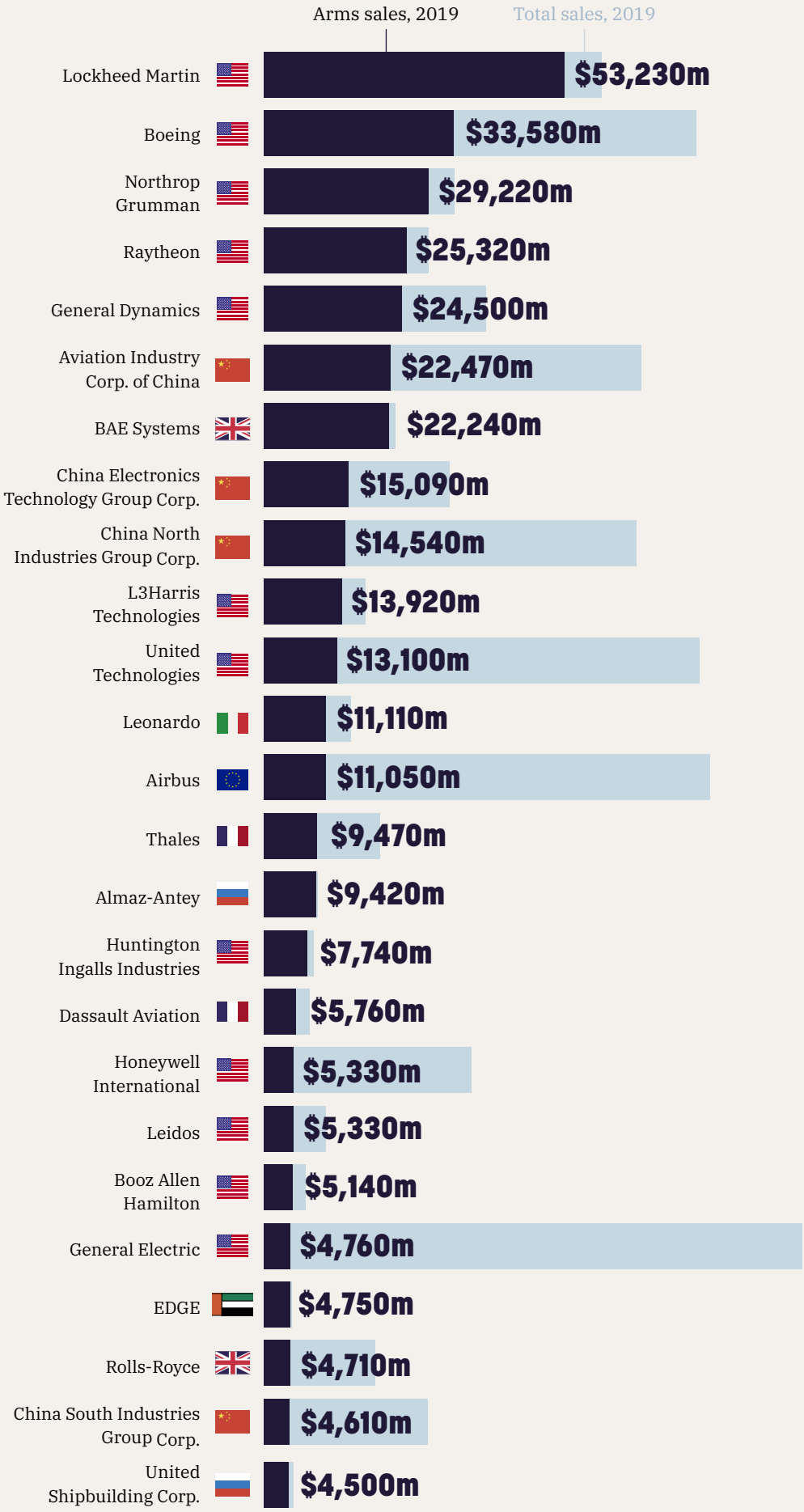
Russia

The Russian government claims to have experienced little impact on its arms sales as a result of COVID, having sold $50-55bn worth of arms in 2020.
Moscow Times 12/03/2021

India

The Indian military is planning to buy 30 armed drones from the US. The deal, thought to be worth $3 billion, will include 30 MQ-9B Predator drones, produced by General Atomics.
Economic Times 10/03/2021

The World's Largest Arms Companies



As calculated by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, **www.sipri.org**
Figures are in US$.

INTEGRATED REVIEW

You won't have missed the headlines in March, following the publication of the Government's long awaited "Integrated Review," a strategy document that covers defence, security, foreign policy and international development.

At the same time as these plans were being drawn up, Boris Johnson was telling us all that there wasn't enough money available to feed hungry children during the school holidays, or to offer more than a paltry 1% pay rise for nurses and other public sector workers who have done so much to get us through the last 12 months.

At a time when we need unprecedented infrastructure investment to rebuild from COVID and tackle the climate crisis, the review confirmed a staggering £24 billion worth of additional military spending over the next four years - the biggest increase since the end of the Cold War.

What is in the review?

- The UK is pouring £6.6 billion into military research and development over the next four years, in order to "master the new technologies of warfare," and become a "Science and Tech Superpower." The new funding will build a National Cyber Force, dedicated to offensive acts; an artificial intelligence centre; and an RAF space command.

> *The review confirmed a staggering £24 billion worth of additional military spending over the next four years - the biggest increase since the end of the Cold War*

- While the Review claims the climate crisis is the UK's number one international priority, funding pledges here combined with those already made in the autumn amount to just £24 billion for the climate, versus £188 billion for the military over four years.
- The UK will increase its nuclear warheads by 44%, going against its legal obligations under the nuclear proliferation treaty, and fuelling a nuclear arms race.
- The "Indo-Pacific Tilt" will send an aircraft carrier group to the Indo-Pacific in 2021 to demonstrate British military prowess, followed by warships, helicopters, and smaller vessels in 2023.
- The review proclaims the UK as a global "force for good," whilst cutting foreign aid by £4 billion. Aid for Yemen will be cut in half, as the UK continues to arm Saudi Arabia and its coalition allies, which have inflicted a brutal bombing campaign on Yemen.
- It talks about the need for "conflict resolution and poverty reduction," and the need to work for "durable political solutions in Libya and Yemen,"

but makes no mention of the UK arming the war on Yemen. It talks about "promoting open societies and democratic values internationally," this is despite the Crime, Police and Sentencing Bill, which signals a draconian crackdown on the right to protest, including against those pushing for faster action on climate change.

A lot of headlines have focused on the 9,500 cut to the number of Army troops, and the retirement of older military vehicles and aircraft, but the plan is to replace them with new high-tech weaponry: drone swarms, laser weapons, and a new generation of combat aircraft. These new weapons are likely to involve uncrewed and autonomous planes, taking us further into the realm of killer robots.

In the detailed defence paper that followed the review, there is less talk than in previous defence reviews of major overseas military interventions, and no targets or timescales for deploying tens of thousands of troops. (Neither is there any reflection on the disastrous failure of past military interventions.) The identified threats include cyber attacks, disinformation, and the ominous response is called, "permanent and persistent engagement" by UK armed forces around the world.

All across the country there are people suffering from the Government's lack of preparedness for a global pandemic and its repeated cuts to public services. This contrasts with the billions of pounds worth of funding that is being spent on expanding into new areas of warfare. Our security is not advanced by throwing ever-greater sums of money at jobs and industries rooted in military aggression. It is strengthened by investing in jobs that can help us transition to a safer world, and a fairer sociey.

Our security is not advanced by throwing ever-greater sums of money at jobs and industries rooted in military aggression

Keep an eye on your inbox and on **caat.org.uk** to take action with the Global Campaign on Military Spending this spring. Soon you will also be able to rewatch our event, Real Human Security at CAAT's digital conference It Starts Here, where speakers from Greenpeace, PCS, Sisters of Frida and the London Mining Network discuss what a new, more human approach to security could look like, more details on our website soon.

Photo: Defence Images | **Source:** Flickr

Business As Usual

A new report was published in March, written by CAAT Research Coordinator Sam Perlo-Freeman, "Business as usual: how major weapons exporters arm the world's conflicts," as part of a joint project led by World Peace Foundation, and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The report, based on a detailed analysis of data on arms sales and conflict from 1990-2018, shows that the UK's appalling arming of the Yemen war is not a one-off, but is sadly typical of the behaviour of all major arms exporters in relation to many of the world's wars. Overall, the report finds no evidence that involvement in armed conflict acts as a barrier to arms sales by any of the top eleven exporters worldwide. The report is available to download on the CAAT website.

Photo: Ibrahem Qasim | Source: Flickr

SIX YEARS OF SHAME

Six years of conflict has caused devastation in Yemen. This is six years that shames the UK

This March marked six years since Saudi-led forces launched their first attacks on Yemen. In that time attacks by the Saudi-led coalition have killed thousands of civilians and created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

In November 2018, Save the Children estimated that 85,000 children had died of starvation since the start of the war. Now the UN has warned that Yemen now faces the worst famine the world has seen in decades. The need for peace is more pressing than ever.

Yemen Data Project has recorded (yemendataproject.org):

22,766 air raids

65,982 individual airstrikes

8,759 civilians deaths

2,336 children killed

9,815 civilians injured

The UK government is complicit in this crisis. UK-made fighter jets, bombs and missiles have played a central role in attacks by the Saudi-led coalition, which have destroyed infrastructure across Yemen.

> *The UN has warned that Yemen now faces the worst famine the world has seen in decades. The need for peace is more pressing than ever*

The UK government has licensed at least £6.8 billion worth of arms sales to the coalition in that time, although the real total is a great deal higher. Most bombs and missiles are sold under "Open" Licences. Despite their name, these are opaque and secretive and do not have any financial value or quantities attached. CAAT estimates that the true value of UK arms sales to the Saudi-led coalition amounts to at least £18 billion.

UK and international rules on arms sales should prohibit arms exports if there is a clear risk of the weapons being used in violations of International humanitarian law (IHL). Yet the government has continued to allow the supply of weapons for use in Yemen despite repeated targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure.

CAAT continues to challenge these sales in the Courts. In 2019, we were successful at the Court of Appeal. The Court found the Government had acted unlawfully when licensing arms sales because it failed to assess whether previous attacks constituted violations of IHL.

The Government was ordered not to approve any new licences while it retook its previous decisions in a lawful manner. Hundreds of millions of pounds of arms sales were put on hold, although existing long-lasting licences remained valid. This meant for example that BAE Systems' work to service and support the Saudi air force, critical to enabling the bombing campaign, continued uninterrupted.

In July 2020 the Government announced that it had completed its review and would now resume arms sales. It concluded that any violations of IHL committed by Saudi forces were "isolated incidents," despite the fact that hundreds of attacks on residential areas, schools, hospitals, civilian gatherings, and agricultural land and facilities have been documented.

CAAT's new legal action challenges this decision. We should have more news on this soon.

Photo: jlhervás | Source: Flickr

SIGNS OF HOPE

Amidst the continuing horror of war in Yemen, there are signs that political sands are shifting in a way that offers hope for peace.

US action

The biggest shift has come from the new US Administration of President Joe Biden, who has made ending the war in Yemen a priority.

Biden announced in February an end to support for "offensive" military operations by Saudi Arabia and its coalition allies, and has suspended arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE pending a review.

Biden's announcement marks a clear shift from the unqualified support provided by the Trump Administration for the Saudi war

It is widely expected that at least some deals – most notably the delivery of precision-guided munitions – will be cancelled. How much more is not clear, in particular whether the crucial maintenance and support services provided by the US to Saudi Arabia's US-made aircraft will continue.

But the announcement marks a clear shift from the unqualified support provided by the Trump Administration for the Saudi war. Biden has also appointed experienced US diplomat Timothy Lenderking to step up diplomatic efforts to end the war.

UK arms continue

Shamefully, the UK government has refused to follow the US lead, and has baldly stated its intention to continue the arms supplies that fuel the war unabated.

In the third quarter of 2020 alone, the first period since the resumption of new export licences following CAAT's 2019 Court of Appeal victory, single individual licences worth £1.4 billion were issued for arms sales to Saudi Arabia. This included £698 million for components for bombs, and £100 million for air-to-surface missiles – munitions clearly intended to be rained down on the people of Yemen.

...And aid has been slashed

Worse still, as Yemen faces famine, the UK has cut humanitarian aid to Yemen by nearly half, from £164 million in 2020 to £87 million this year, a decision that has been condemned by major aid agencies and could have a catastrophic impact on the ground.

But the UK is increasingly isolated

The UK government's cuts to aid for Yemen are only bad news, but the huge outcry in response shows the potential for change – and an increased recognition that this is a crisis the UK helped to create.

Labour leader Keir Starmer used Prime Minister's questions to attack this "unconscionable" decision asking "what would it take for the prime minister to suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia?" And the decision was condemned from across the political spectrum – including by members of Boris Johnson's own party. Former International Development Minister Andrew Mitchell said the decision would "condemn hundreds of thousands of children to starvation."

Meanwhile, the UK is also increasingly isolated in its intransigence, and this offers a huge opportunity for us to pressure the Government for change.

The UK's isolation offers a huge opportunity for us to pressure the Government for change

MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE

The US move has led to widespread calls, including from some senior Conservative MPs previously supportive of arms sales, to follow suit and end or rethink the UK's military support for the war.

The United States is not the only country to have limited arms sales. Thanks to the efforts of our allies in Italy, the Government there revoked export licences for bombs and missiles to Saudi Arabia and other members of the Saudi coalition, ending Italian complicity in the war and setting a precedent for other major arms exporters in Europe.

A number of European countries had already taken steps to reduce arms sales to Saudi forces, including Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and other states, although none of these have played as central a role in the war as the US.

In October, CAAT launched a new legal challenge to the Government's decision to resume licensing arms sales for use in the conflict. As the case moves forward this will be an opportunity to demonstrate that these sales are not just immoral but also unlawful.

We were honoured to receive a nomination for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize nomination – alongside our partners Mwatana for Human Rights, a nomination intended to draw attention to the suffering of the Yemeni people and CAAT's ongoing legal challenge.

This June the UK will hold the G7 Summit in Cornwall. This will represent US President Biden's first visit to the UK and is an opportunity to renew and strengthen calls for the UK to follow the US lead and end its support for the war.

Take action

Let's use this momentum to push for change:

- Please add your name to CAAT's Open Letter to Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The UK is on the wrong side of history and must now help end the deadly conflict in Yemen. In the lead up to the UK hosting the G7 summit, let's pile on the pressure and force Boris Johnson to act. Head to **caat.org.uk/YemenOpenLetter** to sign.
- Write to your MP to add to the pressure on the UK government to stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in the war in Yemen. Find a template letter you can send in two minutes, or adapt yourself at **caat.org.uk/yemen-war**
- Find out more about CAAT and Mwatana's Nobel Peace Prize nomination and what it means for our campaigning at **caat.org.uk/nobelfaq**
- Donate to support CAAT's work, including helping to fund campaigning in support of our ongoing court case against UK government arms sales, at **caat.org.uk/donate**

LOCAL GROUPS RESIST ARMS FAIRS

Trustees and local bigwigs connected to the Malvern Showground are complaining that they have been "bombarded" by letters from anti-arms campaigners.

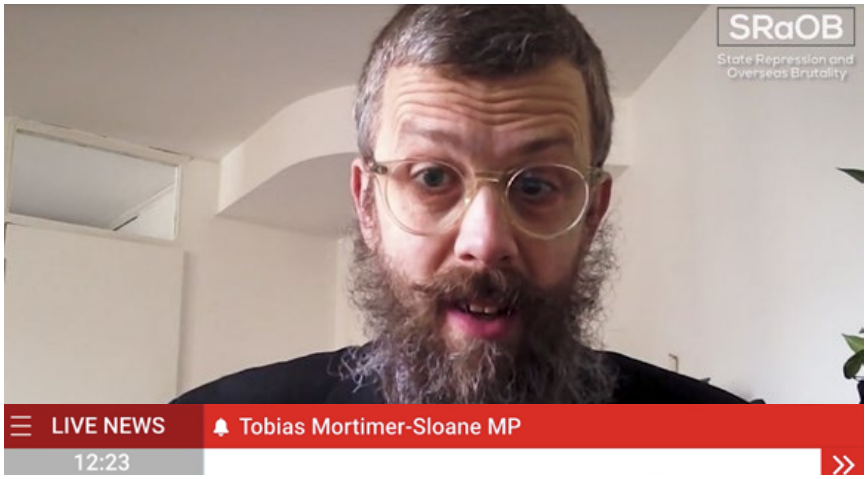
The letter writing has been orchestrated by the 3 Counties CAAT group, who object to their Showground being used to host the 3CDSE arms fair, which is expected later in the year (July). Hundreds of letters have been sent and more are on the way.

Meanwhile campaigners in Farnborough have staged a vigil outside Farnborough Airport, which plays host to the Security and Policing arms fair (and whose organisers offices are nearby).

The fair took place in early March, and was also "greeted" by a video from a spoof Tory minister, 'Tobias Mortimer-Sloan MP' played by Ian from London CAAT. Members of the group worked with film editors Rainbow Collective to create the piece.

"Tobias" declared that "because we need the exports" a country's poor human rights record was "no barrier" to attending the arms fair, "quite the opposite."

In fact Bahrain and the UAE did attend the 2020 fair, despite the UK's "concerns" about their record. It seems that the spoof MP was more honest than the real ones.



Top Banner displayed by Greater Rushmoor Action for Peace at Farnborough © GRAFP
Bottom Ian from London CAAT as, "Minister for State Repression and Overseas Brutality" (from the CAAT YouTube channel).

New groups resisting the arms trade

New CAAT groups have formed in Carlisle (Cumbria), South East Wales (around Abergavenny), and Glasgow.

They join those created in Ayrshire and the Three Counties (Herefordshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire), which have come together during the Covid lockdowns.

This has been quite the adventure in many cases. Wrestling with new technologies, working out how to organise safely, thinking about how to campaign during a period where outdoor protesting is not always easy or safe. Well done to these amazing campaigners!

They have made themselves heard by local representatives and venues hosting arms fairs, made a fuss in the press, and more is planned!

Over the summer CAAT will also be running a series of workshops aimed at supporting local campaigners. This will include sessions on how to use new technologies for online meetings (including virtual whiteboards and such), how to facilitate meetings (not easy when you can't see everyone's faces!), and how to campaign virtually (including against online arms fairs).

If you would like to set up a local group, but are not sure how, please contact Kirsten Bayes, CAAT's Local Outreach Coordinator, **outreach@caat.org.uk**. Help is available to find other campaigners, host meetings, and make plans. Similarly please get in touch if you would like to join the groups mentioned or get involved in the workshops later this year.

You may also like to keep an eye on CAAT's Events page: **caat.org.uk/events** – you are welcome to join any local group meeting advertised there.

CAAT SCOTLAND

A major investigation by CAAT and the Sunday Post exposed the extent of Scotland's involvement in the war in Yemen.

The report highlighted the 16 companies with offices in Scotland that have applied for military export licences to Saudi-led coalition members or worked directly with its forces. These include Raytheon, which makes components for Paveway IV bombs at its factory in Glenrothes, Fife, and BAE Systems, which produces many of the fighter jets being used in the bombing campaign.

The investigation also highlighted the millions of pounds worth of public money that the Scottish government has given in grants to companies complicit in the war in Yemen, and the 29 lobbying meetings with MSPs that those companies have had over the last two years. Scottish government ministers alone have registered 23 meetings since the start of the war.

> *The investigation highlighted the millions of pounds worth of public money that the Scottish government has given in grants to companies complicit in the war in Yemen*

Photo: Think Defence | Source: Flickr

Ayrshire CAAT

Over the last few months, activists in Ayrshire have been meeting to resist the arms trade on Scotland's West Coast. We've been writing to local newspapers and calling in to radio shows to talk about the insidious grip arms companies have on our towns.

Chemring Energetics is a looming shadow over Stevenston, and as lockdown begins to ease, we'll be taking action and reaching out to workers and the community to think about alternatives to their production. Join us, email **scotland@caat.org.uk** to get involved!

Photo: Jorge Franganillo | Source: Flickr

Glasgow CAAT

Home to over 630,000 people, Glasgow is one of the most populated cities in Britain. We're a passionate city with a strong history of peacemaking and grassroots resistance. This year we reclaimed our 2014 title as the "World's Friendliest City." We're also situated 25 miles upstream from the largest stockpile of thermonuclear warheads in Western Europe and provide a home to arms companies such as BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin, Thales, Rolls Royce, and Qinetiq. We strongly oppose the use of our city as a playground for warmongerers to host arms fairs and profit from fueling humanitarian crises.

Our new CAAT group has come together to empower our members with the knowledge and skills we need to effectively resist our city's occupation by the arms trade and create meaningful reform in the institutions that seek to legitimise it.

ARMS FAIRS

September will see the unwelcome return of Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) to London.

DSEI is Europe's biggest arms fairs, and will bring representatives of many of the world's most authoritarian militaries and police forces to the UK to buy arms from all of the biggest arms companies.

Despite the pandemic, organisers have confirmed that the event will take place as per normal.

Despite the pandemic, organisers have confirmed that the event will take place as per normal. And, as in previous years there will be protests against it. A consultation in the autumn on CAAT's role in resisting future arms fairs concluded that the most effective use of CAAT's resources was to focus on capacity building. This means that you will see the following big changes to how we protest arms fairs in 2021:

- A shift away from organising the DSEI Week of Action, towards support for more localised action against arms fairs across the UK, throughout the year.
- A more robust training programme, to equip more supporters with the skills they need to resist in the "real" and digital world.
- A Stop the Arms Fairs Fund, offering more people the chance to apply for funds to support their organising.

Keep an eye on **caat.org.uk** and CAAT News for updates on how to get involved.

Photo: Darren Johnson | **Source:** CAAT/Flickr

Tell the London Mayoral candidates to stop DSEI

If you or anyone you know lives in London, you can help pressure the 2021 Mayoral candidates to take a stand against DSEI, and raise the profile of one of the largest arms fairs in the world, which returns to London in September.

Send a message to the candidates and ask them, if elected, to commit to recovering the costs of policing the event from DSEI's organisers, and doing everything in their power to stop DSEI from returning to London. Take action at **caat.org.uk/London-Stop-DSEI**

Security & Policing

March saw the return of Security & Policing, an annual arms fair with a particular focus on "security equipment" for police forces and private security companies. The event has always been a secretive one, with journalists banned from entry and only pre-vetted guests with the correct credentials.

This year it took place online, with buyers visiting virtual stalls and speaking to exhibitors from afar. Over 10,000 guests attended the exhibition, with 190 online exhibitors, including many major arms manufacturers. None of this could have happened without the help of the Home Office, who coordinated the fair, and UK Defence & Security Exports, the civil service arms promotion unit, which assisted with logistics and invited international delegates.

The event has always been a secretive one, with journalists banned from entry and only pre-vetted guests with the correct credentials

Photo: Bob Bob | **Source:** Flickr

"AND STILL WE STRUGGLE"

Reflections on CAAT's It Starts Here digital conference by Siana Bangura, Training & Events Co-ordinator at CAAT & Producer of It Starts Here 2021

Our It Starts Here Conference returned for another year – this time revamped!

As poet, writer, and Black Feminist Audre Lorde reminds us, "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."

Taking place from Friday 19th March – Sun 21st March, at the end of Israeli Apartheid Week, and with the Sunday being the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we designed an ambitious, exciting, and educational interactive programme that brought together much of our work in previous years as we continue to understand the arms trade as inextricably linked to other intersecting issues.

And in light of COVID-related restrictions, over 400 people signed up to take to Zoom and convene over a jam-packed and thought-provoking weekend.

The 2019 edition of It Starts Here saw us gather in person at Resource For London (now that does feel like a long time ago!) to listen to panels and talks on issues as diverse and varied as anti-racism, migrant solidarity, climate justice and the arms trade; economics, jobs, "just transition," nuclear disarmament, unions, austerity and the arms trade and we also focused on the London borough of Newham, where the DSEI arms fair takes place bi-annually. We also curated workshops and trainings in sustainable organising, using social media as an activist, and of course Know Your Rights Tasters to name just a few.

> *Our speakers reflected on the nature of meaningful solidarity and how we can learn from shared tactics, as well as shared histories*

Two years later – in a dramatically different socio-political landscape, it's fair to say – attendees were still able to experience some of the old familiars, alongside much that nods to CAAT's commitment to grow and change as the world does.

We launched with an event on Friday evening marking ten years of the Arab uprisings of 2011, and drawing parallels with the Black Lives Matter Civil Rights Movements of 2013 to the present, with last year's peak of activity sending powerful reverberations globally. Our speakers reflected on the nature of meaningful solidarity and how we can learn from shared tactics, as well as shared histories. As much as there is nuance and the need for specificity, it is also true similar injustices underpin many of our fights, including racism, colonialism, capitalism and militarism.

Other panels that took place across our Saturday programme included taking a look at Scotland and its relationship to the arms trade; exploring how we demilitarise education; how we re-think security and move towards Real Human Security; and reflecting on the role of art and creativity in our resistance.

And as part of our commitment to capacity building and working with supporters and activists in a more decentralised way, on Sunday there was a full day of workshops and trainings, aiming to upskill our activists to campaign in a digital world, while also preparing us to resume our in-person work once the world opens up again. From workshops in Citizen Journalism, Online Facilitation, and Ad-Hacking, to Media training and our hugely popular Arms Trade Research 101

as well as, of course, a Know Your Rights Taster and even some chair yoga to combat the inevitable Zoom fatigue – there was something for everyone.

And although ensuring our events are truly fully-accessible is an ongoing challenge, we were pleased to work with an outstanding team of five BSL interpreters across the weekend who ensured our panels could be accessed and engaged with by a wider audience, including D/deaf communities. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Nakisayi Laursen, Eze Ani, Omoyele Thomas, Rebekah Spencer, and Sumayya Si-Tayeb for their stunning work across the weekend.

And if you weren't able to join us, or you're keen to re-live the conversations and continue unpacking and untangling these key issues, keep an eye on the CAAT YouTube channel for recordings of the Friday and Saturday panels from the weekend: **bit.ly/CAATonYouTube**

Our anti-arms trade training and events are more important than ever. In the face of a government committed to a deadly "business as usual" approach, our training and events are essential for giving activists the tools they need to challenge the power and influence of the arms trade, even during a pandemic. And we know not everyone can afford contributions at this time, but we want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to our recent Training and Events fundraising appeal. Your support helps us to organise important events such as It Starts Here, and train more activists than ever before to take on the arms trade, online and offline.

Although there's nothing quite like being together in the flesh and the ongoing challenges we all face are still a mountain to climb, we continue to take comfort in the opportunities this new way of working has brought us, as well as the many ways we've been able to engage with supporters across the UK and all over the world thanks to digital.

Our anti-arms trade training and events are more important than ever

Thank you to everyone who donated to our last appeal to deliver anti-arms trade training and events like "It Starts Here." You helped to raise over £11,000 so far and donations are still coming in! If you can afford to make a donation to fund this work, please head to caat.org.uk/eventdonation today.

THEY SAID IT

"Asked by Yousef, from the Saudi Embassy in UK, whether my perceptions of Saudi Arabia have changed after this trip, I said that my previous notions have been blown out of the water. I've seen a modern, progressive Saudi Arabia that has totally changed my view of this country."

Tweet from 2018 April 2018 which has come back to haunt Labour's Hartlepool by-election candidate Paul Williams. The trip he was on was paid for by the Saudi Foreign Ministry, The Independent, 20/03/2021

"Look...peace is not going to break out in the Middle East anytime soon. I think it remains an area where we'll continue to see solid growth."

Greg Hayes, Raytheon CEO, Defense One, 26/01/2021

"There came a point when I was no longer enabling the security of the country — I thought I was endangering it."

Former US Defence Secretary James Mattis explains why he left the Trump administration, Chicago Maroon, 28/01/2021

Introducing Katie

Katie Fallon is CAAT's new Political Coordinator. She joins CAAT from a recent stint at the Irish Mission to the UN in New York, where she covered 'Third Committee' (Human Rights) at the 70th UN General Assembly. Prior to that Katie worked at the UK Bureau of Reporters without Borders, advocating for the rights of journalists in the UK and internationally.

Katie is working across Parliament to further CAAT's campaigns and is passionate about ethical and coherent international relations and visions of security. As a former member of London CAAT, she has been inspired by CAAT's campaigning for a number of years now and is delighted to be on the team! You can reach her at **katie@caat.org.uk**.

DONATE TODAY!

You can donate to CAAT by either visiting our website at caat.org.uk, or completing the form below (in block capitals) and returning it to: Freepost RSYR-UCBS-GHEE, CAAT, Unit 4, 5–7 Wells Terrace, London, N4 3JU

Donations direct to CAAT are the most useful for the campaign, but if you send a Charities Aid Foundation cheque please make it payable to TREAT (Trust for Research and Education on Arms Trade) making clear that you wish for your donation to support CAAT's research programme. Unlike CAAT, TREAT is a registered charity (No.328694).

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I would like to receive the CAAT News quarterly magazine by post: Yes No
I would like to receive updates about the campaign and urgent action opportunities by email: Yes No
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A donation of £10 a month makes a real difference and helps us plan our future work.

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